

REPLY

TO

Col. Pickering's Attack

UPON

A PENNSYLVANIA FARMER.



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REPLY

TO

COLONEL PICKERING'S ATTACK.

A REVIEW of the Memoirs of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Society, had appeared in the Massachusetts Journal, with copious extracts and the subjoined remarks.

Col. Pickering, fancying that the Pennsylvania Society had controverted opinions, of which they had never heard, conceived himself bound, to introduce me as their officer, with peculiar gentleness to the agricultural world*—elevating me to distinction—conferring consequence on me to give the pleasures of contention to him, who revels in conflict, and regards not defeat.

He gave quotation on quotation, details without end, referring to books which are obsolete, to authorities which he did not understand—yet to indulgence he has claim, as he declares he has not read much—happy to obtain the more credit, for genius in writing so well.

He had filled many quarto pages, to which I replied without a feeling of asperity, or a personal remark.

The Editors of the Massachusetts Journal, “his friends,” having been cited in support of his objects and plans, took the first opportunity of confuting his assertions upon the only points, in which I felt concerned—giving him compliments upon his opportunities—wholesome admonitions upon his course, condemning his mode of comparison as “not precisely correct”—agreeing with him in general remarks, against which, they are so general, no man who is sane would attempt to contend.

A new series of essays are issued, with comments on my

* “I have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Powel, and have been gratified in seeing his signal display of talent and energy, in applying his ample means to improve the agriculture of our country.”—*Col. Pickering's No. 3.*

purse*—noticing my pedigree, which even he cannot condemn—introducing females of my family—fragments of history—Norman kings—antique researches and Alderney bulls—with plaudits on our friend Haines—attributing to me motives, which no man who knows me could suspect—which no man who knows him will believe—ascribing to me blunders in writing, worthy of himself, in language entirely his own.

I am dragged from my peaceful pursuits as a farmer, by a man, whom I have neither had opportunity nor desire to offend. I am coerced to reply.

—

From the Massachusetts Agricultural Journal.

Memoirs of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Society.

“A very interesting little volume under this title, has been recently published by the intelligent, indefatigable and manly editor of the American Farmer.” * * * * *

“The book is beautifully printed, and the plates are superior to any thing of the sort in any agricultural work. They must have been expensive. It is not our purpose to review this work in the modern style of reviews, which is to insert the title page, and then to proceed to a dissertation, in which nothing or very little is said of the work itself. Our purpose is to recommend it to the notice of the reading class of farmers, by extracts, not so copious as to injure the sale of the work, but just enough to enable our readers to appreciate its merits. We make no apology for preferring these extracts to original matter. We hold very cheap that ridiculous jealousy of the editors of public journals, which leads them to reject an excellent article, which has appeared in another work, and to insert one much inferior. The object of all printed works should be the diffusion of knowledge, and that object should not be defeated by pride or jealousy. If Maryland or Pennsylvania should furnish sounder remarks than Massachusetts, there is no reason why the readers in Massachusetts should not see them.”

* * * * *

“We shall begin with some remarks of John Hare Powel, Esq. on the various breeds of Horned Cattle. This is a topic peculiarly interesting to New England. This must be our agricultural staple to the end of time. Horned cattle, sheep and swine, must constitute the great sources of revenue to our farmers. We give no opinion as to the soundness of Mr. Powel’s opinions; we mean to hold an even balance between all the contending parties. This,

* “I am not the adopted heir to a great estate.” * * * *

Col. Pickering.

HOWEVER, WE OWE TO MR. POWEL TO SAY, IN ZEAL, PUBLIC SPIRIT, INDUSTRY AND EXPERIENCE, HE YIELDS TO NO MAN.

"HE IS FRANK, AND SOMETIMES STRONG IN THE EXPRESSION OF HIS SENTIMENTS, BUT HE ALWAYS STATES THE GROUNDS ON WHICH THEY ARE FORMED."

* * * * *

Extract from a Letter to Jonathan Roberts, Esq. President of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Society.

"My situation as the Recording Secretary, made me privy to every transaction connected with the arrangement and publication of the book. It had proceeded to a considerable extent, and was to have been paid for out of Mr. Powel's private purse. * * * * I can say without the least hesitation, that no extract was made or abridged, nor was any paper rejected, to promote any opinion of his own, *nor did he designate* the point at which the selections were *to stop*. * * * * I live near to his farm, and am in habits of intimacy and frequent intercourse. I have seen his accounts of purchases and sales, and can say with perfect precision, that so far from his having ever derived profit, or had a view to profit, from his cattle, it is within my knowledge, that his expenditures have so far exceeded the returns, that for many years the rent of his farm, and the wages of his labourers, have been sunk. His bulls have been repeatedly stationed in different counties, yet no charge has ever been made for their services." * * * *

(Signed)

JOHN P. MILNOR, *Recording Sec'y.*

Colonel Pickering's Letter, No. 6, assailing Mr. Powel.

"The extracts from Lawrence, in the Repository, were made by Dr. Dexter, when President of the Massachusetts Agricultural Society; and I cannot doubt they were correctly made. He was not a dealer in live-stock, *nor had any favourite race to recommend above, and to the exclusion of all others*; nor any conceivable motive, by alterations or omissions, to keep out of sight any information which he thought might be useful to his fellow citizens."—COL. PICKERING.

MR. POWEL'S REPLY.

WHEN Colonel Pickering ushered me into notice, blandly saying I know Mr. Powel, I might have rejoined, to all men Colonel Pickering is well known. I trembled, yet hoped I might escape the vehemence of his invective, and the restlessness of his quill, as I could conceive no subject of col-

lision, nor source of discontent, which could between this prominent statesman, and a farmer arise. In truth, I was unconscious of having differed from him on any point, which could be discussed in a farmer's paper, having little regarded what he had written, and but in one instance, having had the happiness to hear, what he thought or had collated, in an address at a Brighton show. Upon my conscience I can aver, that although I might on that occasion have been enlightened, by a disquisition so elaborate and sagaciously derived, I must lament my attention not having been sufficiently attracted, and my having been led off by some ladies, who were disturbed at the interesting moment, when he was repeating the process of

* * * * *

Having called forth this ancient senator's ire—accusing me of garbling—of “reprehensible effusions”^{*}—of “unfounded productions”—upbraiding me with sundry high crimes, and gross misdemeanors, I console myself in knowing that the brightest ornaments of his country, have been assailed by his weapons—the living and the dead. Washington—whose dignity kept insolence in awe—whose glory shed lustre upon his associate—whose virtues command the admiration of the world, is pursued in his bitterness, and neither, by the sanctity of the tomb, nor by the mantle of Heaven, is defended from the venom of his shaft.

Where I am accused of giving my language, as that of the Massachusetts Journal, or of him, he is in error, and I am sure in January, he will change his mind. Can this veteran, who has been for half a century engaged in the most active scene of paper war, be ignorant, that notes of quotation, where reference is neither given, nor implied, are essential to designate a sentence, from any authority derived? He abandons his ground, and scolds me, because a Society of Farmers in Pennsylvania, put forth “*extracts*” to suit their “peculiar

^{*} “Not the least reprehensible of these effusions, is Mr. Powel's imputing (for such seems to be the implication) to the Trustees or to me, the vain-glorious and offensive boast, that Massachusetts is the *best* of the New England States.”—*Col. Pickering's Letter, No. 6.*

views," justified by a prefatory letter, whereof he thinks fit to quote but a certain part.—They say (*Memoirs*,)

"You are aware, that our Association is principally composed of practical farmers—that by the act of incorporation, all others are excluded from our offices—that, although we have endeavoured to collect facts, and promulgate opinions, in the shape best fitted for *our* purposes, we have no pretension as writers, and must claim for our communications great indulgence, as they are neither enlivened by the elaborate deductions of specious theory, nor embellished by the exquisite efforts of fanciful and untiring quackery.

"You will perceive, that various extracts have been made, without regard to the arrangement of the authors, from whom they are taken, as it was necessary, occasionally, to omit passages inapplicable to the circumstances and condition of this country, and to pass by others which, as they involve abstruse scientific disquisitions, are not fitted to the peculiar views of our institution.

"If we have violated the etiquette established among authors, we trust we shall be forgiven, as we are farmers, not *writers*."

Their views, were hostile to the notions of the Dilletanti—were opposed to the propagation of a wretched and unthrifty race of cattle, whose small secretions of milk, they conceived with Culley, fitted them but for the lawns of the rich, whose carcasses, as they had proved "*too valuable for beef*,"* disqualified them, for the general purposes, of both rich, and poor. These farmers regard not, the "*weight of butter for inches*," but estimate the profit in butter, by the *consumption of food*. If they have omitted to give, all that Mr. Lawrence had said, they omitted very strong passages in favour of Short-Horns, which Colonel Pickering has obligingly introduced, amended by "*supposes*"† in the body of a sen-

* Mr. Haines's Letter—Memoirs Penn. Agric. Soc. p. 20.—"Whilst other gentlemen were selecting the finest forms to feast the eye, and a carcass, which if well fed, would grow to an enormous size, I wanted a small animal, WHOSE CARCASS WAS TOO VALUABLE FOR BEEF."

† "The extreme coarseness and size of the northern Short-Horns led, he (Culley) thinks, to the introduction of Norman or *Alderney* bulls, at some period of the eighteenth century, with the precise date of which we are unacquainted," and he supposes "there never was a more fortunate cross, as in no other country exists so excellent a breed of cattle, including all the useful properties. In one, perhaps the most important respect, great milking, they are superior, and even without rivals."—*Col. Pickering's No. 6.*

tence, making the author appear doubtful, where he is decisive, and clear. Why did he not proceed, in imitation of Mr. Lawrence's frankness, who in 1809,* declares, page 614—"On recollection, I find I *have written incorrectly*," * * * "Doubtless the fault, I found with Holderness oxen, ought in great measure, to be attributed to the milkiness of the breed, or the *Alderney cross*," * * * * "These *Short-Horned cattle*, are in a state of the highest improvement, from the exertions of various eminent breeders in the North."

To this "*improved race*," I have always referred. My opinions, and those of my associates, are not founded on the contrast of sentences, but on comparison of the animals—upon "ocular demonstration"—they are determined by estimates at the pail, in the scales, and the stall. We conceive it absurd to appeal, to "*old writers*" for instruction, on that, which in their day had not appeared—for opinions upon cattle, which we breed, feed and use.

I am condemned by Colonel Pickering, as opposed to Devons—am assailed by clumsy sarcasm for unfair omissions—am attacked by gross imputation, for fraudulent "*alterations*," to meet as a "DEALER IN LIVE STOCK" my own ends. Yet if the quotation on Devons, had been extended, it would have shown in the language of Lawrence, that they are not only "so far inferior, to both Long, and Short-Horns, namely, both in quantity, and quality of milk, that they are certainly no objects for the regular dairy, * * * but, that they are *universally rejected* by the dairies, of their own, and the neighbouring counties." If the notice upon Alderneys had been pursued, it would have appeared, that "in weight of butter *for inches*, they are far superior to all"—that "as to quality, they are among the first milkers in the world." It is expressly stated, Memoirs, page 74, (extracts from Culley)—"The Alderney breed is only to be met with about the seats of our nobility, and gentry, upon account of their giving *exceeding rich milk* to support the luxuries of the tea

* Col. Pickering (No. 6) calls Lawrence an old writer.

table.” As Mr. Haines had declared, page 21: “In churning it, mixed with the cream of other cows, we have usually had the Alderney butter come first, *taken out of the churn*, and the operation continued half an hour or more, before a second gathering of butter has taken place;” they conceived it absurd, to enlarge upon the *miraculous* properties of Alderney cream. The product of a goat, in *proportion to inches*, exceeds that of a good cow.

Colonel Pickering alleges, “Mr. Powel, in quoting the above “passage from Lawrence, leaves out the words “or Alderney;” this was a *convenient omission*, after the *damnatory sentence* he had just before pronounced on the Alderneys.” What then is to be said of him, who whilst condemning me for leaving out *two words*, which *I* did not leave out, omits a whole sentence, supporting my opinions, but *destructive* of his own. The paragraph which he has quoted, from Lawrence, asserting that “the *Norman* and Island cattle make fat very quick,” &c. has in addition the following words.

“This species is, in course, a proper cross for the large “and coarse boned; but in that view, I should prefer the real “*NORMANS* from the *continent*, as generally, better *shaped* “*than the Islanders.*”

Yet Col. Pickering asserts—“Lawrence and Culley here evidently consider the Norman and Alderney as the same race or breed.”* This gentleman appears to have forgotten, that he had just given the words of Lawrence.—“The Alderney are a *variety* of, and smaller than the Norman.”† Variety, is change, succession of one thing to another, difference, dissimilitude. What constitutes variety in technical language? I am deceived if it be not established by characteristics, which are specific, properties distinct, determined in the animal by change of circumstances, or climate, or by the breeder’s art. How are races

* If Lawrence considered the Norman and Alderney as the same race or breed—where was the convenience in omitting “or Alderney,” when Norman was given.

† Col. Pickering’s No. 6.

improved? how are they impaired? Normandy is the finest province of France—one of the fairest portions of the globe, cultivated with the utmost skill, combining the advantages, which science and intelligence afford. The little Alderney Isle is bleak and miserably poor—the husbandry is bad—the cattle are ill fed—their properties, propensities, and forms, are consequently changed.

That Lawrence did not consider variety as synonymous with alteration in size, is evident, as he says, “the Alderney are a *variety of*, and smaller than the Norman.” Culley, page 52, states, “the Sussex and Hereford Cattle, are varieties of the Devonshire, and of greater size.” It will not, I trust, be contended that Cramp’s Sussex Cow, or the “White-faced Oxen,” are Devons varying only in size.

When Colonel Pickering would condemn a race of beasts as worthless, he introduces “supposes”^{*} and “opinion,” to diminish the force of Lawrence’s praise. When he would convict a man as sordid, and unfair, he gives opinions from Culley, which after close examination, *in Culley*, cannot be found—and palms his dreams upon Lawrence, in direct opposition to that which Lawrence had said.

His mistakes were amusing for a time: but they become painful to those, who recal the position he held—His strides are so vigorous—his conceptions so rapid, he bounds from his path—in the vivid flashes of imagination, losing sight of his object, and brandishing his weapon, lacerates his own head. Thus his serenity is clouded, and instead of bewailing his star, he rails rather uncourteously at me, because I “preserve some consistency,” and do not admit in violation of reason and fact, that Lawrence thought Alderneys made “Improved” Short-Horns good, although he asserts, page

^{*} “Lawrence proceeds in his quotation from Culley, describing the superiority of this improved breed to the *Old Short-Horns* in milk, in flesh, in tallowing within the first degree. They have both speed and strength (he supposes) for labour: ‘that from their superior quantity of milk, they rival, in his opinion, the best Long-Horns in the cheese and butter dairies, and for suckling they are unrivalled.’”—*Col. Pickering’s No. 6.*

614, Alderneys contributed to make the old Short-Horns bad.

I appeal to the Recording Secretary of the Society, to determine, whether the omission of "*or Alderney*," was not purely accidental, arising probably from the printer's mistake. It would be well to prove, that the interpolation of "supposes," in the quotation, was not the result of design. Let Colonel Pickering examine the passage, which has called forth his "*damnatory sentence*;" he will find, that Lawrence uses the term Norman, after the first sentence throughout. If the Pennsylvania Society, had been engaged in hurling attack, they might look to Colonel Pickering, and find authority in his practice, who, when quoting "the ingenious Mr. Marshall," omitted to notice the opinions, which militated against his own—who in citing Mr. Lowell, passed by all which were opposed to his plan.

My associates, although not practised as writers, would leave to Colonel Pickering the pleasure of overthrowing himself—the delight at the end of his labours of finding, that the highest authority which he has given, notwithstanding he exultingly said—"I am happy in being able to quote the opinions of Mr. Lowell, corresponding with my own," frankly avows, (Mass. Jour. No. 4, vol. 8,) "In the course of his (Colonel Pickering's) remarks and "quotations, he has been pleased to refer to the editors of "this Journal, or at least to one of them, and he has cited "*passages* which might lead readers to infer, that *we* entertain the opinion that little benefit will be derived from "importing the improved races of Great Britain," &c.

The editor proceeds to prove the fallacy of Colonel Pickering's objections—compliments him upon his acquirements, acknowledging the correctness of some opinions conveyed in his former letters, and finally, after having produced proofs, in aid of the argument, urges—"If Colonel Pickering should "pass a six weeks' tour in England, he would feel as we do, "that it *is not a question to be discussed, but a point settled*." Again—"Let Mr. Marshall or Mr. Young (old writers) say

“ what they will, nothing can destroy the effect of ocular demonstration. The cattle of England are far superior to our own as a body, and it is not *precisely correct* to compare individual exceptions in our country, with general and average statements of whole counties in England. * * * * She offers you the effect of fifty years experiment, will you refuse it? We hope not.”

Happily for my associates, and happily for those who may do them the honour to read their selections, Colonel Pickering’s estimate of fitness, *in writing*, and his mode of forcing conclusions, have not been received.

All men are not gifted with the felicitous knack of rendering amusing to themselves, ponderous details, which half a century since, might have applied: nor is it conceived, where *extracts* are given, that the authority should be quoted to its end.

I am accused of “ unfounded productions.” I would ask him, to show that his productions are founded, where he asserts, that *I have* made extracts, that any extracts have been given in the work to which he adverts, to promote any object of mine, except where I state, page 41, I have made selections, incorporating them in my communications, to support the positions I had assumed.

The ardour of his effusions, has carried him to Germantown, and has led him, unhappily, to drag in my *innocent* friend Haines, who requires no man’s bolster, except against the horns of his bull, leaving all the Long-Horns, Herefords, Devons, and Short-Horns, to make an attack upon me, and my opinions of the Alderney race.

I said they were savage.—Mr. Bowman of Wilkesbarre, was killed by one of the Germantown Alderney bulls—Mr. S——, of Philadelphia, was nearly destroyed by another—A gentleman of Frankford by a third was prostrated, and was with difficulty saved—a fourth broke from the first cattle show, and could not be constrained—a fifth, although tied in his stall, was so vicious that he could not be approached—a sixth was slaughtered, as he could not be used. They are unthrifty, I suppose, as Mr. Haines has never shown

to me one that was not poor.—They are crooked, I presume, as I have never seen one that was straight.—The cows are bad *milkers* I know.—I saw them in Europe—I have had them, and tried them.—They are worthless, I believe, as they have been by farmers, graziers, and butchers, ridiculed from our shows.*

I forbear to pursue the meanderings of this desultory discussion. I was wearied at being carried “sixty years” back, but now we are to hop over seven or eight centuries, to find dignity for Alderneys, by tracing their origin to the conquest, higher than that of three-fourths of the nobility, whose cream-pots they fill.

Colonel Pickering asserts—“Unquestionably great numbers of the Norman race of cattle” were introduced. Where are his facts? Is it to be inferred, that the Britons, Danes, and Saxons, had till the conquest, been denied the use of milk.

I am heartily tired of the Sussex prison—Mr. Cramp—Mr. Oakes, and their cows, and am so weary of this antiquarian’s disquisition, and interminable discussion, that I would to Colonel Pickering, leave the honour of the field, if I were not convinced, that victory would be chaunted, where there had been no defeat.

* “Mr. Haines’s imported French cow, exhibited in an extraordinary degree, the beautiful symmetry and peculiarities of the Brittany Cattle, contrasted with the irregular shape, and light carcasses of his pure Alderney stock.

[Signed]

THOMAS SMITH,
GEORGE SHEAFF,
CHARLES LLOYD.”

THOMAS SERRILL, Assistant Judge.

Report of the Committee on Stock, in 1822, to the Philadelphia Society, when they held a County Fund for Cattle Shows.

The Brittany Cow, proved a bad milker, and was by Mr. Haines exchanged for a common cow, which was half dry, and she was afterwards sold for a trifle.

† * * * * Whose Duke (of Normandy), between seven and eight hundred years ago, crossed over. * * * *

In his system of tactics, I must have recourse to huge folios, and antique records, to contend with "*conjectures*," or as Don Quixote, to battle with phantoms of imagination, derived from feudal times.

It is unlucky, that I, who laugh at details collated from British agricultural books, should be selected and rated, for extracts, made under the direction of a society of farmers, to promote their "*peculiar views*"—that I should be censured, because the results of my experience, appear in the volume wherein Colonel Pickering determines that the Pennsylvania Society have acted incorrectly, because they do not happen to agree with the Dilletanti, and him. I would inquire, why had he not, in his chivalrous regard for integrity and truth, thought fit to give all my communications, when he did me the honour first to bring me and my notices into view? Wherefore, did he select those paragraphs which he imagined were vulnerable, interlarding them with his own phrases and expletives, if he thought Farmer Parkinson's idle jests, on a "cow dealer's" tricks, and Lawrence's recital of his "friend's" tale—of "the finder's" report, upon a "stray cow," by good faith, were imperatively required, whether the Society considered the matter worth having, the opinions sound, or untrue.

They gave from Lawrence, Culley, and Parkinson, a summary of the characteristics, of various families of neat cattle, which are known in Great Britain. It was wholly distinct from all my communications, and in no wise determined, either in its shape, or extent, by any thing which I had written or said. And as to any discrepancy, omission, or error of the press, the Recording Secretary of the Society, at the moment reminds me, that when the proofs were presented, I did not examine them, declaring, "I am not answerable for what these writers have said."

The limits of the work denied to the editor, the excursive range, in which Colonel Pickering is wont to indulge. He occasionally omitted, "passages inapplicable to the circumstances and condition of this country" elevating American

farmers, above the enjoyment of the trite jests, and improbable tales of Farmer Parkinson, and Lawrence's friend, "passing by others," which, in the lectures of Sir Humphrey Davy, "involve abstruse, scientific disquisitions, much beyond the reach of those, *who, among farmers, are distinguished, by their labours, and success at the tail of the plough.*"

Colonel Pickering strangely identifies himself, with the Massachusetts Agricultural Journal, for whose editors, I have expressed, and must in common with all men, who are acquainted with their works, entertain the highest esteem, although we do not on all points agree. He accuses me of imputing to the Trustees, or to him, "the vain glorious and offensive boast, that Massachusetts, is the best of the New England States."

I pray him to be assured, that when I shall accuse him, of "vain-glorious and offensive boasting," I shall not find it necessary by "implication," nor by recourse to his Essays on bullocks and bulls, to fix the charge. I gave my own opinions—I pin my faith upon no man's sleeve. I hope ere this, he has discovered, that I never could desire, that my opinions, should be propped by him.

In taking leave of Colonel Pickering's No. 6, I beg to remind him, that "*I am happy*" in being sustained by Governor Lincoln, Governor Lloyd, Mr. Wolcott, Mr. Barnitz, Mr. Carpenter, and Mr. Cox—that my facts, are established by Committees' reports, and the scales:—that *he is "pleased"* to cite "passages, which might lead readers to infer" that opinions are sound, which his friends, the Editors of the Massachusetts Journal, refute—that he contends against that which they determine, "is not a question to be discussed, but a point *settled*"—that he "compares individual exceptions, with general and average statements," which they pronounce "is not *precisely correct*"—that he is abandoned to his fate, without authority, or hope, and having shifted his battery, and enlisted the Alderneys in vain, he is found wan-

dering in the eleventh century—groping in the dark ages*
—seeking tradition to fit his machinery for a fresh farce.

I have the honour to be,

Yours, &c.

JOHN HARE POWEL.

* “The Sussex breed, Marshall says, very much resemble the Hereford cattle; and both are considered by English writers, to be nearly related to the Devons—a breed despised by Mr. Powel.† The rich milking quality of Sussex cows may have been derived from ancestors of the Norman or Alderney breed. Sussex county lies on the northern side of the English channel. Opposite to it, on the southern side, lies the province of Normandy, whose Duke, between seven and eight hundred years ago, crossed over with an army of Norman French—landed in Sussex—encountered the English army, killed their king, and ascended his throne. But he and his descendants, kings of England, held possession of Normandy for nearly two hundred years; during which, an intimate intercourse was kept up, and multitudes of Normans went over to England, carrying with them, unquestionably, great numbers of the Norman race of cattle, of which the Alderneys were a family, and originally doubtless of precisely the same character; Alderney being an island belonging to the Duchy of Normandy, and only about twenty miles distant from the main land. But when Normandy, overrun by the armies of the kings of France, was ceded to that crown, the English retained Alderney and some other islands near that coast, and hold them to this day. This would account for the frequent mention, by English writers, of Alderney cows, which probably continue to be occasionally introduced into England; although in some parts of it they have an established stock. “In the dairies of the Isle of Wight, as well as those of some parts of Hampshire, the Alderneys prevail much, and are highly esteemed for butter.—[Hampshire county joins Sussex]. If Mr. Cramp’s cow is a sample (an extraordinary one indeed) of Sussex cows, it will not be deemed an unnatural conjecture, that their milking quality, especially in the superior richness of the milk, is derived from the ancient Norman race; of which, as I have said, the Alderneys are a branch.”—*Col. Pickering*.

† Mr. Powel has for some years, bred from imported animals of various breeds, among which are a cow and bull of Sussex breed.

REPLY

TO

COLONEL PICKERING'S Nos. VII. & VIII.

WE left Col. Pickering wandering in the eleventh century, making "conjectures" among chivalrous knights of olden times. Unhappily he returns with strange infatuation, again "*travelling*" with old Young, relating tales of wild cattle, anecdotes of a "stranger," and the feats of the same "unruly" bull. Is it "precisely correct" to censure me for allowing my "hobby to run," when he would have me follow him bounding over centuries,* or flying round the circle, in which no man can discover either beginning or end.

He quotes my assertion, that I am not fond of deductions from figures in relation to agricultural matters, that I am much more disposed to take impressions founded upon a series of evidence, arising from general investigation, than isolated facts. This is my opinion; yet it may be necessary, to wrest the weapon from the assailant, to expose his feebleness when he shall no longer have it in his grasp. We are sometimes coerced to do that which it is painful to perform. A man may be pestered by garrulity—distracted by folly—borne down by vehemence—or overpowered with noise, having no chance of being heard, but by elevating his voice—no means of being defended, but by meeting violence with force.

In the reply to Col. Pickering, the calculations were found-

* See Col. Pickering's abridgment of the History of the Conquest, genealogy of the Alderneys, disquisitions, theories, &c. and notions upon the introduction of cattle by warriors of feudal times.

ed upon the facts HE HAD GIVEN. If his facts were true—if his statements were not garbled, *the deductions were sound.*

In my No. I. the following paragraph appeared—"Col. Pickering states, from Young's tour, made 50 or 60 years ago, 'some cows gave only two gallons of milk a day, while others gave 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and some 9 gallons of milk a day, the average quantity five gallons per cow.' In another district a dairy of MIDDLING cows, yielded from 4 to 7 pounds of butter per week,' equal to 208 or 365 pounds per annum. 'The best cows of the Lincolnshire breed, will give on an average, 6 gallons of milk a day, seven or eight pounds of butter a week,' equal to 365 or 417 pounds of butter a year."

To this Col. Pickering rejoins—"Now let us see how ingeniously Mr. Powel figures, &c. * * * He repeats from "my first letter, the great quantities of milk produced in "some English dairies per cow—from 2 to 9 gallons, on an "average five gallons a day, but omits the small annual "amount of their butter being as abovementioned, 2 firkins "or 112 pounds per cow."

Here Col. Pickering, forgetting his *own quotation*, omits the QUANTITY OF CHEESE, WHICH HE HAD TOLD* US WAS ONE-THIRD THE VALUE OF THE BUTTER produced by the same cows.

I contended in my No. 3, and I think I have shown, that the product of butter, depends upon various circumstances. It is common with all manufactured articles, is influenced by the material of which it is composed; but it is affected by chemical causes, the vibrations of the atmosphere, *the shape of the milk pan*;† and Col. Pickering has informed us from the ingenious Mr. Marshall, even by "*dexterity of finger*" in skimming the cream. When cheese is made from the skim milk, and its quality regarded, as in England, where the labourers depend much upon it for their support, less cream is taken; but where new milk cheese is made, of conse-

* Col. Pickering's No. 1.—*N. E. Farmer.*

† Col. Pickering, No. 1.

quence still less butter must be produced, by dairies affording *one-third of the value of the butter in cheese.*

I know not, and I care not, whether Young meant that the cows gave from 4 to 7 pounds of butter a week throughout the year, or merely during the time which Col. Pickering is *now* satisfied to take. If Young wrote what he did not mean, he must be a very insecure authority, for any man, except such an one as Col. Pickering, who "*guesses*," and is "*satisfied*," that he meant exactly the term which fits his present plan.

What is to be thought of the fairness of a writer, who gives his language, or the language of Young, with unusual precision, and tells you five months after, oh! I did not mean what I wrote, I meant something else.

Let it be recollected, I stated I am not fond of estimates founded upon figures, in relation to agricultural matters; and my object *was to show the fallacy of Col. Pickering's calculations, the uncertainty of all deductions so derived*, if mine were not conclusive and true.

Col. Pickering asks—"Will Mr. Powel hazard his reputation as a practical farmer, and a man of sense, and say, that he thinks Mr. Young, in mentioning the products of those middling cows, at four to seven pounds of butter a week, meant that they yielded those quantities in every week in the year?"*

I answer NO—Mr. Powel "will not hazard his reputation for sense," nor for any other matter, upon any thing which Col. Pickering has written, quoted, or said, within the last ten years. If he meant not what he said, what did he mean? It

* Governor Lincoln states, *Memoirs*, page 15, that "one of his (Short Horned) heifers, 3 years old, with her second calf, has not been dry since she dropped her first, having given four quarts on the morning of her second calving." "I have now seven heifers in milk, four of them 3 years, and three 2 years old, and for richness in quality and abundance in quantity, they are not excelled by the very best cows of *any age* of THE NATIVE stock." *Ibid.* Might not these cows average from 4 to 7 pounds of butter a week throughout the year?

is to be presumed 7 pounds in the best season—4 pounds in the worst season. In one number he condemns me for “discrediting” Young—in another implies, I must be a fool for receiving him as worthy of belief. He is not satisfied with giving his “old writers,” whom his “friends of the Massachusetts Journal” reject—but attempts to support them, by his *own suppositions*, at the same time he would make me appear ridiculous, when I exhibit deductions, founded on *their statements*, proved by the rule of three, treating them as if they told the truth.

I stated I have adhered to Colonel Pickering’s authorities—my calculations were founded exclusively upon them—“Now let us see, how ingeniously” Colonel Pickering attempts to escape.—He who attacks me, because two words, “*or Alderney*” were omitted from a passage, in nowise connected with my opinions, or views, finds it “convenient,” in No. 8 to omit an important clause of *his own sentence*, conveying “ONE THIRD OF THE VALUE” of the butter, at the time he attempts to show *the whole* product of the milk. He had given in his No. I,* the following passage:—

“Some cows gave only two gallons of milk a day, while others gave 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and some 9 gallons of milk a day;—and he states the average quantity to be five gallons per cow—yet the farmers obtained upon a medium only two firkins of butter a year per cow, and cheese about one-third in value of the butter.” It was thus impracticable to ascertain the quantity of butter, their milk would have afforded—“one-third of the value of butter,” having been obtained in cheese, without recourse to some other quotation, to afford the rule. In the *same* number, Colonel Pickering stated, “in another district a dairy of middling cows gave from two to four gallons of milk a day, and yielded from 4 to 7 pounds of butter per week; thus requiring *from 14 to 16 quarts* of milk to make one pound of butter.”

I therefore took *his language, his own estimate*, allowing *14 to 16 quarts of milk*, as the quantity required to make

* The substance of this he repeats in No. 5.

one pound of butter—not because I thought it the proper quantity—not because I thought Colonel Pickering meant to tell us the proper quantity—or had told us any thing which “a man of sense” ought to regard, but because I thought that he would not resist his own statement, that he would neither deny that which he had given, nor acknowledge that he wrote one thing, and meant another.—And in truth I had hoped, notwithstanding his fondness for controversy, that when he could not find cause of cavil against his opponent, he would not quarrel with himself.

Whilst he assails me for fraudulent intentions, accusing me of excluding from the *Memoirs* all which could operate against my views, he convicts himself of injustice, showing that his charge is “unfounded,” by introducing large extracts from Mr. Haines’ letter,* which was not excluded, urging it, with certain additions, to overthrow that which I had said. He quotes from the same work the evidence of my friend Mr. Featherstonhaugh, whose science, accuracy, calmness, and adherence to truth, carry force in all that he asserts, to prove that although this distinguished agriculturist, considered “Short-Horns as capable of producing THE GREATEST QUANTITY OF BEEF, TALLOW, AND MILK, IN THE SHORTEST TIME,” their fitness for working oxen remained to be shown.

My communications appeared in one part of the volume—extracts made by the authority of the Pennsylvania Society appeared in another. I am harshly upbraided, as they did not embrace all which the author had written, although in page 614, on revision of his work, Lawrence candidly acknowledged he had been wrong.

Colonel Pickering takes from page 36 of the *Memoirs*, headed by the editor, DEVONS BEST FOR LABOUR, one paragraph, which he thinks operates against my views; and omits to take from page 37, a passage in continuation, but in direct opposition to his own, showing that Mr. Featherstonhaugh had “acquired a full-blooded Devon bull, for the express purpose of breeding oxen,” but found it expedient, to

* See page 20.

cross him with a Short-Horn cow, "*to obtain both size and smartness.*"

Colonel Pickering tells us again, he has "read little." If he had written less, and read more, his predictions in politics, his notions upon bulls, his attacks upon farmers, would be less frequent, and more sound.

He has seen no cattle in Europe—very few of improved races at home—"has read little," yet he "guesses," and presumes to condemn, that of which, without inspiration, he must be uninformed—making round assertions—forcing his own quotations—filling pages, as if his lucubrations were to be received as maxims, his conjectures as axioms, to be confuted at the pain of harsh invective, and personal abuse.

If he had read a little more, he would have found that I had stated, page 51, in my reply to Mr. Featherstonhaugh, "*I should not select Short-Horns expressly for draught alone.*"

He sneeringly observes, that the Improved Short-Horns are called "Improved Durham Short-Horns," by Mr. Powel. If he had not been ignorant of the subject, he would have known their name.—See Herd Book, 1822.

He attempts to correct the extracts quoted in the Memoirs, yet ascribes to Culley, the opinions which Lawrence had given: the extracts were made from Lawrence's text. I do not to contend, that *all* his mistakes are the result of design.

He lustily asserts, "but here Mr. Powel will step forward, and in reference to the imported Short-Horns, confidently remark, *as if it were a fact already settled*—'If it shall appear that by the multiplication of this race the produce of beef upon a given extent of land would be nearly doubled—the quantity of butter increased—the facility of procuring powerful oxen for draught not lessened—and withal, that the amount of offal would be diminished—the weight of flesh and of fat would be carried upon the proper parts, I trust it will not be contended that the discussion is futile, or the premium absurd, which shall have brought this race more generally into view.'"

Here is an instance of Colonel Pickering's "stepping"—not "forward;" and I might add, an instance of something more.

What might not be said of a man, who at the time he gives a quotation, beginning with "IF," stated hypothetically by the writer, and founded upon the opinions of persons whose letters had been introduced, asserts that *the writer* treated it *as a fact* already settled. What would Colonel Pickering call this?

The passage he has quoted, winding up his tirade, was found in my letter, page 42, *Memoirs*; referring to Major Rudd's letter, stating that "Improved Short-Horns become fatter, and heavier at two years old, than the old breeds at three and even four" ****—that "If this breed was every where disseminated, *the produce of beef on a given extent of land would be nearly doubled*"—to GOVERNOR LINCOLN'S LETTER, page 15, stating—"I have no knowledge of the properties of this stock for labour, never having altered but one of the males; I cannot, however, see any reason to doubt their value in this particular, **** for THE DAIRY AND STALL, I speak, with the utmost confidence, OF THEIR PRE-EMINENCE."*****

Colonel Pickering proceeds—"Here Mr. Powel and I
" must certainly agree, and if I live long enough for the arri-
" val of the happy time, &c. I will join Mr. Powel in every
" measure, to the extent of my limited powers, to propagate
" rapidly and extensively his favourite race. But that un-
" lucky "IF" must first be *changed* into a *positive assertion*
" of the facts, and these supported by *unexceptionable testi-*
" mony."

The "IF" was applied, as *I* am in the habit of using it, where I refer to the opinions of others, where I have not the facts immediately to show, leaving to discomfited disputants, abandoned by their authorities,—shaken off by their friends, entangled in their own arguments, to "change IF into certainty"—to give opinions, as "facts, supported by testi-

mony," which although positive and precise, may be distorted after mature deliberation to meet any new end.

I have omitted some points of his attack, not venturing to interfere in matters of science, where he and Sir Joseph Banks cannot agree.

I am heartily glad to bid him adieu—to leave him soaring in the regions of philosophy, boldly asserting, that the PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY MISTOOK THE EFFECT FOR THE CAUSE.*

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN HARE POWEL.

Powelton, Oct. 1 1825.

To the President of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Society.

* "The only writing of his (Sir Joseph Banks) bearing a relation to husbandry which has fallen into my hands, is a small pamphlet on the mildew of wheat; in which, though his theory seems to have received *some* countenance from another eminent naturalist,† I venture to express my opinion that Sir Joseph has mistaken the *effect* for the *cause*."—*Col. Pickering, Letter 8.*

† Thomas A. Knight, Esq.